

Title of Chapter in Book: Fossil Fuels

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Abstract: Fossil fuels are nonrenewable energy resources formed from dead remains of plants and lower animals including phytoplankton and zooplankton that have settled to the sea or lake bottom in large quantities under anoxic conditions. They are nonrenewable resources because they take millions of years to form, and reserves are being depleted much faster than new ones are being formed. They formed from ancient organisms that died and were buried under layers of accumulating sediment. As additional sediment layers built up over these organic deposits, the materials were subjected to increasing temperatures and pressures, leading to the formation of a waxy material known as kerogen, and subsequently hydrocarbons. The processes involved are diagenesis and catagenesis.